

PROPOSITION 68

**TRIBAL GAMING COMPACT RENEGOTIATION. NON-TRIBAL COMMERCIAL
GAMBLING EXPANSION. REVENUES, TAX EXEMPTIONS. INITIATIVE
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND STATUTE.**

BACKGROUND

The California Constitution and state statutes specify the types of legal gambling that can occur in California. For instance, current law allows wagering on horse races and certain games in licensed card rooms. In addition, Indian tribes with tribal-state gambling compacts can operate slot machines and certain other casino-style gambling in California.

Card Rooms and Horse Racing

Card Rooms. The state allows card rooms to conduct card games where the card room operator has no stake in the outcome of the game. The players play against each other and pay the card room a fee for the use of the facilities. Typical card games include draw poker, 7-card stud, and poker pai gow. Certain games—such as twenty-one—are prohibited. There are a total of 96 licensed card rooms in the state. Local governments approve card rooms, as well as establish the hours of operation, the number of tables, and wagering limits. Current state law limits the expansion of both the number of card rooms and the size of existing card rooms until January 2010.

Horse Racing. The state issues licenses to racing associations that then lease tracks for racing events. In California, there are a total of 6 privately owned racetracks, 9 racing fairs, and 20 simulcast-only facilities. (These latter facilities do not have live racing; instead, they allow betting on televised races occurring elsewhere in the world.)

Gambling on Indian Land

Federal law and the State Constitution govern gambling operations on Indian land. Tribes that enter into a tribal-state gambling compact may operate slot machines and engage in card games where the operator has a stake in the outcome, such as twenty-one. Currently, 64 tribes have compacts and operate 53 casinos with a total of more than 54,000 slot machines. Any new or amended compact must be approved by the Legislature, the Governor, and the federal government. As sovereign nations, tribes are largely exempt from state and local taxes and laws, including California environmental laws.

1999 Compacts. Most tribes signed their current compacts in 1999. Under these compacts, a tribe may operate up to two facilities and up to a total of 2,000 slot machines. In exchange, tribes make some payments to the state which can only be used for specified purposes (such as for making payments to tribes that either do not operate

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slot machines or operate fewer than 350 machines). These payments total over \$100 million annually. Under these compacts, tribes are required to prepare an environmental study analyzing the impact on the surrounding area of any new or expanded gambling facility. These compacts will expire in 2020.

2004 Compacts. In the summer of 2004, five tribes signed amendments to their compacts, and these revised agreements were approved by the state. Under these new agreements, these tribes may operate as many slot machines as they desire. In exchange, tribes make a specified payment annually to the state, with additional payments for each slot machine added to their facilities. As additional tribes sign similar compacts, payments to the state are expected to total in the hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Unlike the payments required by the 1999 compacts, the state can use these payments for any purpose. The newer compacts also require the tribes to (1) prepare more detailed environmental studies; (2) negotiate with local governments regarding payments addressing the impacts of new gambling facilities on the local communities; and (3) follow other provisions related to patron disputes, building codes, and labor relations. These new agreements expire in 2030, ten years later than the 1999 compacts.

PROPOSAL

This measure, which amends the State Constitution and state statutes, sets up two possible scenarios regarding new state gambling revenues.

- The first scenario would occur only if all Indian tribes with compacts agree to specified revisions to their existing compacts.
- The second scenario would be triggered if the tribes do not agree to the revisions. In this case, 5 existing racetracks and 11 existing card rooms would be allowed to operate slot machines.

These two scenarios are discussed below.

Revision of Current Tribal-State Compacts

Under the first scenario, all compact tribes would be required to agree with the Governor to terms required by this measure within 90 days of its passage. Specifically, the measure requires that all tribes with compacts agree to (1) pay 25 percent of their "net win" to the Gaming Revenue Trust Fund (GRTF, a state fund established by the measure) and (2) comply with certain state laws, including those governing environmental protection, gambling regulation, and political campaign contributions. Net win is defined as the wagering revenue from all slot machines operated by a tribe after prizes are paid out, but prior to the payment of operational expenses. Under federal law, the federal government would have to approve the revised agreements.

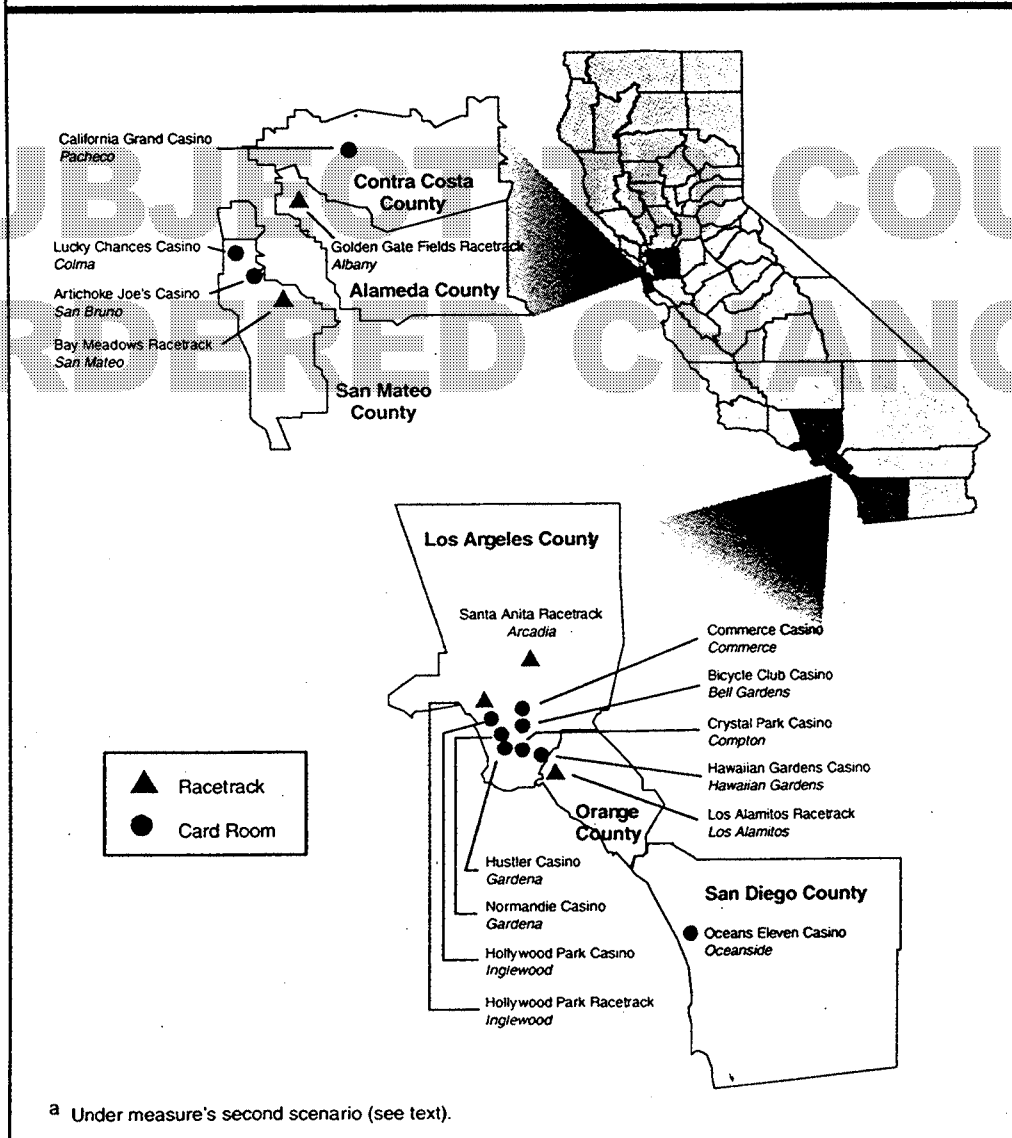
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Expansion of Gambling if Compacts Are Not Revised

As noted above, if the current compacts are not revised under the first scenario, the measure would allow slot machines on non-Indian lands. Specifically, under the second scenario, the measure allows specified racetracks and card rooms located in Alameda, Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, and San Mateo Counties to operate up to 30,000 slot machines (see Figure 1). The measure would allow the sale or sharing of slot machine licenses in certain circumstances. The measure also makes permanent the limit on the expansion of both the number of card rooms and the size of existing card rooms (due to expire in January 2010 under current law).

Figure 1

Sites for Slot Machines at Racetracks and Card Rooms^a



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Net Win Payments. Racetracks and card rooms would pay 30 percent of the net win from their slot machines to the GRTF. They would also pay 2 percent of their net win to the city and 1 percent to the county in which the gambling facility is located. The measure specifies that the payments to the GRTF be in place of any state or local gambling-related taxes or fees enacted after September 1, 2003.

The five racetracks also would be required to pay annually an additional 20 percent of the net win on their slot machines. These funds would be administered by the California Horse Racing Board and used to benefit the horse racing industry, including the increase of race purses.

Distribution of Gambling Revenues

Payments based on net win would be made to the GRTF under either scenario—whether tribes revised their compacts or racetracks and card rooms operated slot machines. In either case, slot machine operators would be required to pay for annual audits of their reported net win and payments made to the GRTF. The measure establishes a five-member board appointed by the Governor to administer the GRTF. Figure 2 describes how funds in the GRTF would be distributed. The bulk of the funds would be distributed to local governments throughout the state for additional child protective, police, and firefighting services.

Figure 2

Distribution of Funds From The Gaming Revenue Trust Fund

- ✓ First, payments would be made for three specific purposes:
 - Up to 1 percent of the funds for administrative costs of the initiative.
 - \$3 million annually for “responsible gambling” programs.
 - Supplemental payments to tribes that do not operate slot machines or operate fewer than 350 machines.
- ✓ Second, remaining funds would be distributed to local governments throughout the state as follows:
 - 50 percent would be allocated to counties to provide services for abused and foster care children. The amount allocated to a county would be based on the number of child abuse referrals.
 - 35 percent to local governments (based on population) for additional sheriffs and police officers.
 - 15 percent to local governments (based on population) for additional firefighters.

The measure also specifies that these funds could not replace funds already being used for the same purpose.

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Related Provisions in Proposition 70

Proposition 70 on this ballot also contains provisions affecting the number of slot machines authorized in the state. That measure would allow tribes entering a new or amended compact to expand the types of games authorized at casinos. It would also eliminate the existing limits on the number of slot machines and facilities a tribe can operate. In exchange for the exclusive right to these types of gambling, tribes would pay the state a percentage of their net income from gambling activities. The State Constitution provides that if the provisions of two approved propositions are in conflict, only the provisions of the measure with the higher number of yes votes at the statewide election take effect.

FISCAL EFFECT

The fiscal effect of the measure on state and local governments would depend on whether current compacts are revised or if racetracks and card rooms operate slot machines. The fiscal effect under each scenario is discussed below.

Revision of the Current Tribal-State Compacts

Net Win Payments. While tribes do not publicly report information on their slot machine revenues, it is estimated that the machines are generating net win of over \$5 billion annually in California. If the tribes agree to this measure's provisions, tribes would pay 25 percent of their slot machines' net win to the GRTF—potentially over \$1 billion annually. These payments would be provided primarily to local governments to increase funding for child protective, police, and firefighting services.

Existing Payments to the State. As described above, tribes under the 1999 and 2004 compacts pay hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the state for both specific and general purposes. This measure does not specifically address whether these payments would continue or cease under the compact revision process. As a result, it appears that the continuation of the payments would be subject to negotiation between the tribes and the Governor. If the revised compacts do not include a continuation of these payments, the state would experience a reduction in payments—potentially totaling hundreds of millions of dollars annually.

Expansion of Gambling at Card Rooms and Racetracks

Net Win Payments. If the tribes do not agree to revise their compacts within the time required, specific card rooms and horse racing tracks would be authorized to operate up to 30,000 slot machines. These entities would pay 30 percent of the net win to the GRTF. The amount of these payments would depend on the number of slot machines in operation and their net win. These revenues could potentially be over \$1 billion annually. These revenues would be provided primarily to local governments to increase funding for child protective, police, and firefighting services.

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Additional Payments to Local Governments. Also under this scenario, the cities in which these establishments are located would collectively receive payments in the high tens of millions of dollars (2 percent of the net win). Counties in which these establishments are located would collectively receive payments of half of this amount (1 percent of the net win). The use of these funds is not restricted.

Increased Taxable Economic Activity. If the tribes do not agree to the requirements of this measure, the expansion of gambling at card rooms and racetracks could result in an overall increase in the amount of taxable economic activity in California. This would occur if, over time, there was a large diversion of gambling activity and associated spending from other states to California. This would also be the case to the extent that the gambling authorized by this measure replaced existing tribal gambling activities (since much tribal activity is exempt from state taxation). This additional gambling-related activity would lead to an unknown increase in state and local tax revenues.

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